

MANUFACTURING EXTENSION PARTNERSHIP

Success Stories from the Field

Union Foundry Company

Alabama Technology Network

ATN Helps Union Foundry Company Improve Efficiency and Maintain Competitiveness

Client Profile:

Union Foundry, a division of McWane Inc., has been a manufacturing mainstay in Anniston, Alabama since 1912. Union Foundry is among the leading manufacturers of cast pipe fittings and accessory components. The company employs 368 people.

Situation:

Union Foundry recognized a need to grow its company, improve efficiencies and reduce costs. The company needed to improve its competitiveness and began working with the Alabama Technology Network (ATN), a NIST MEP network affiliate, in applying Lean Continuous Improvement (CI) to its operations.

Solution:

Since it began working with ATN, Union Foundry has applied continuous improvement (CI) into multiple areas of its operations through the application of Lean training and Rapid Improvement Events in the manufacturing process. Additionally, ATN provided company leaders with strategy planning and CI initiative coaching assistance. "We have conducted Rapid Improvement Events in our component blasting and cleaning area, our mold casting area, machining area, cement lining process, and in the core box rigging area," said Bryan Biehunko, Union Foundry's Plant Manager. "The events have significantly reduced set-up and travel time, in some cases by more than half. We have applied 5S (sort, set in order, shine, standardize and sustain) to areas and the result there is better organization as well as improved work flow and efficiency. And in other areas, we have improved product throughput by as much as 50 percent and production volume by nearly 80 percent." As a result of ATN's assistance, Union Foundry has remained competitive in a fierce global market.

Results:

- * Retained sales of \$1million.
- * Realized \$53,000 savings in tooling costs.
- * Improved setup time by 50 percent.
- * Improved throughput by 50 percent.
- * Increased setups from 8/shift to 25/shift.
- * Reduced travel time from 15 minutes to 3 minutes.
- * Achieved a more competitive and profitable position.
- * Increased production volume by 80 percent.

Testimonial:

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"The training and assistance helped us to improve the efficiency of our manufacturing and management processes and has definitely made us more competitive."

Bryan Biehunko, Plant Manager